



**April 5, 2004**

## **Providence man is sentenced for gun possession**

A federal judge has sentenced **Ralph Quinones**, 26, of Providence, to 51 months in federal prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm. Providence Police officers arrested Quinones in July after he fled during a traffic stop and tossed a handgun out of his car.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the sentence, which Chief U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres imposed on April 2 in U.S. District Court, Providence. Quinones, of 1163 Elmwood Avenue, has prior felony convictions for assault, drug possession, and escape.

At a hearing in December at which Quinones pleaded guilty to a one-count indictment, Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha said that, on July 9, 2003, Providence Police officers Thomas Zincone and Dennis O'Brien, patrolling in an unmarked cruiser, pulled up behind a blue Nissan Maxima at Messer and Cranston Streets. Officer Zincone flashed the cruiser's lights and the officers approached the Maxima. The driver, later identified as Quinones, ignored an order to open the car door and drove off.

While pursuing the Maxima, the officers observed the driver throw a silver handgun out the driver's window and over the roof of the car. The driver pulled the car over in front of an apartment building on Bellevue Avenue and forced his way into the building. The officers arrested Quinones after a brief struggle as he tried to force his way into a third floor apartment. They later recovered the handgun that he had thrown from the car.

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**Providence Police** and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms** investigated the case. The case was prosecuted federally under a **Project Safe Neighborhoods** initiative in which firearms cases are jointly reviewed by the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Attorney's Office to determine where best to prosecute them. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes.

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Contact: 401-528-5224

E-mail: [thomas.connell@usdoj.gov](mailto:thomas.connell@usdoj.gov)